INFANT BAPTISM,

AND

The First Query thereupon.

Whether all parents how notorious soever for their Deboysery, are priviledged upon account of their own Baptism, to present their Infants thereunto.

The Negative is here maintained.

The Promise is unto you, and to your Children, Acts 2. 39.

Nothing is more disorderous, and contrary to the mind and institution of Christ, than that they should be *implanted*, as visible members *into Christ Body*, of whom we cannot have the least hope, they will ever prove *his Disciples*, Therefore we make Baptisme, a very pageantry and mee mockery, if there be none of the kindred pious and godly, that will undertake for the education of this Infant in the Nurture and admonition of the Lord, *Cal. D. Joan. Knoxo Scoto Epist.* 285.

It is an oversight that cannot be excused by Stewards in Gods house, admitting to Baptism all Infants whatsoever, how rude, ignorant and wicked soever their Parents are, *Amis. of Consc.* Book 4. Chap. 27.

Dum sacramenta violantur ipse cujus sacramenta sunt violatur, When the Sacraments be misu'ed, God himselfe whose Sacraments they be, is abused, *Hier. in Mal.* first Chap.

London, Printed for *Henry Crips*, living in Popes-head-ally, neer *Lombard street*, 1656.

INFANT BAPTISM

The first Section

And Quere.

Whether all Infants are to be admitted to Baptism by priviledge of their Parents Baptisme, though they are unreasonable and wicked, wholly ignorant of, and strangers to the Covenant of Grace by Jesus Christ, contented, and choosing rather to continue such?

The Negative.

That these Infants born of such Parents are not to be admitted to Baptism is under our maintenance.

Chap. I

Before we enter upon this, we would premise some things, first in reference to our selves, to prevent, if may be, some false and unconstantiall dealing in this, and other matters, one or two things also, relating to the Question here in hand debate. First then.

§ 1. We are not ignorant that some of the best Learned and Godly Divines, *Mr. Calvin* beyond the Seas, and at home amongst us excellent *Perkins*, *Ames*ius*, (we will name no more) hold for the *Affirmative*, That the Children of *wicked Christians*, though born in Fornication, may be baptized: But then, which the Reader should observe, That Learned man gives two Cautions for securing the Church, as to the bringing up these Children in the *Nurture* and *Admonition* of the Lord, which were never to this day observed, so far as we have heard: and we have very little or no hope at all, that ever these can be observed. So then, we hope, though we do oppose this *Tenent*, That all Infants are to be admitted to Baptism, yet we shall not oppose the drift and intent of these Excellent Men, which undoubtedly was, That all things be done in the Church of Christ Sowards like, *decently* and *in order*: For since the Sacrament of Baptism, as well as that of the Lords Supper, is a badge to shew our separation from the World, all profane societies therein, and to signifie our communion one with another visibly in the profession & confession of the Faith, as our spiritual Union and Communion with Christ our *Head* mystically; Therefore the administration thereof should be such, as should suit the Nature of the Ordinance, and serve the end of it: And this cannot possibly be, as we conceive, unless these Children born of debauched Parents, and now admitted to Baptism, be taken out of the hands of those Parents, and committed to the hands of those that are found faithful. All this be spoken in the first place, That the Cautions or Provisoes these Godly Men have put in here, *That the Church of Christ ought not to dominere*, may be as well observed, as their holding for the Affirmative is, *That all* Children born in a Church are to be baptized therein.

Gal. 3. 8.

Amesius lib. 4. cap.

§ 2. We do heartily profess our shallowness, that we cannot [illegible] in those fundamentals of a Church: there is [illegible] *Ecclesia* or without the [illegible] in shadow. This in some part sowers of the [illegible] of Gods purely taught, then a Church [illegible] the Church indeed, which [illegible]

improvement of all that was spoken to their ears. But we would adde a third, there is an *Ecclesia abusiva*, visible every where, which abuseth what they hear, wresting and perverting of it, as they do all the Scriptures to their own destruction: and these will be called a Church too, a malignant Church say we, being declared enemies to the cresse of our Lord Jesus Christ, and that their Children are not to be admitted to baptism is our perswasion, and we shall tell you in all humility, we hope, what hath led us to this perswasion, and confirmed us therein.

In the third place, this we suppose may be urged against us also. That we meddle in matters belonging not to us; this pertains to the Ministers of Christ, who are, or who are not to be admitted as aforesaid. § 3.

To this we humbly reply, That though this belongeth primarily and chiefly to the Ministers, yet not wholly and solely unto them, but so to them also, who are, by the good hand of God with the word of his grace, *added to the Church* unto with Gospel Communion with Him. These will, with their Pastors leave, which they have, and indeed reasonably it cannot be denyed unto them, i. e. to it with all thankfulness, and all little enough, and be careful with all their care, That these Ordinances of Christ be kept pure, and given forth to others, who can make out their right and title thereunto, and not to Dogs and Swine, unclean and filthy ones, that do wallow in all the pollutions of the world, while yet they profess themselves Believers, Disciples, and Saints, but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and to every good work reprobate. Not to give neither, who, though they should break and rayon in the former, but to the eye pretty fair and clean, yea, known enemies to the Cross of Christ, minding earthly things, turning their backs upon the Communion of the Church, which is the Charge that carries Christ trampled down the world, and setting their faces stedfastly to the Feast and Table of the Lord. We think (with Deference nevertheless had to such, as we know is to be had to the Governors of Christ as aforesaid) else how can we answer the Charge of the Lord unto us, having wrought so graciously

for us, to do our duties to promote the word of his grace, that it may run and be glorified, and take all foolish stumbling blocks out of the way thereof, may be removed out of the way; and nothing so much obstructive in our sight as these, under their rude, very boorish insultings, made upon the *Pew* and the *Communion Table*.

But is not this some reflection upon the Ministers Office? surely no; for God forbids us to intrude there; The Lord hath used him as an instrument to his hand, to bring us over to Himselfe.

And now what should we do for the Lord and for the servants of the Lord? we stand through the supply of the spirit, ready girt in our spirits, to do Him all the service we can; and not the least disservice for a world; and we know not how to perform this service any other way, than in being *Helps* unto Him, to help on the work of the Lord in our own and others hearts, and the Church of Christ there; and if we would, through the world, *become Fellow-helpers to the truth*, That we may shew forth the praises of Him who hath called us out of Dan Iuels lord His *wonderful Light*. As for ruling we meddle not with it, it is the part of His Office, and as our duty is, we leave it to him: only we humbly, and as becometh, give our advice, being called there unto, with submission till to better judgement, and all the honor be well pleased to him that desires to endeavours to walk before God in all pleasing; I do before charge in our opinion, which the old Dissenters preach against *Diotrephes*, he would refuse to take in, and cast upon him to cast out, as he pleased, giving no account of his matters, what he practised he did, and so did all. And for any other with such Evidences of the full draw hearts to the truth there, love as they were ordained by Him, that is *Christ*, above all Apostle he will in his own order. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]

Apostles did not do so, though without question, they might have given as much good counsel in [illegible] as we have heard of the [illegible] of the Church, 1 Pet. 5. 11. she, but Christ. Yet these Apostles would be holden to not in the most ordinary matters, but advising them with the Church: As in the choice of Deacons to take the oversight of the poor. (An office then in season, and very necessary to the Church when they see the need of it.) *The twelve called* Acts 6. 2. *the multitude of the Disciples unto them.* And if in these matters of so low consideration, in comparison, they would consult with the Church. How much more in such matters as so highly relate to Christ and His Church; in the giving forth the Seals of his Body and Blood. Now truly Sir, we must crave leave to speak freely here, and tell you what we think. This you and your Brethren of your way are persuaded do take too much upon you: we cannot tell whether you do advise with any one godly Man in your parish about the ordering of Church matters; possibly if you did—but we forbear, only let us remember you, counsel does well here also, *& plus videbit oculi quam oculus*: Therefore we cannot forbear to tell you, so much we love you, how that learned man conscionates the sons of men, that are exalted in government over their brethren, that they take heed of *a lofty spirit*, the *greatest closer of the heart against the truth of* Mr. *Owen* God. He hath promised to teach the *humble* and the *lowly* of Fol. *pag.* *in mind*, the proud *He beholdeth afar off.* 72.

Therefore Sir, we shall endeavour to hold forth our practise as to these matters, and hold fast thereunto, as reasonably to our power, as you read he did the Ship, when his arms were cut off, he held it with his teeth, so we with our hearts do as well, and hold as fast. 3.

You may be pleased to remember withal, your own charge upon us, and what weight it must needs carry with us, give me Scripture ground for your practise, else I shall count it but a meer fancy and phantastick practise. And truly, well, you may so do, if we cannot shew you the rule by which we practise, and order our doings, and this from the Scriptures of God.

God. But yet you are wel[illegible] [illegible] on [illegible] [illegible] and
[illegible] nothing on you [illegible] to speak [illegible] [illegible] and rege-
lations of our doings. [illegible] [illegible] [illegible]
to a Lords house on earth, there is but one Steward by office,
yet every child and servant in the house are, or should be Stew-
ards by fidelity; so of a Church or a Parish there is but one
Steward by office, yet every one is bound upon account of
their Stewards-like fidelity to have a common eye of the ho-
§ 4. nour and welfare of Gods house.

This more we would say for our selves, If we should be thought to deal too strictly with your Believers, Disciples and Saints, we are to be understood speaking of those Believers at large, who can make no other proof of their Faith, but that their faces were sprinkled with water: nor that they are Disciples and Saints, but in your account onely, and their own, because you call them so, and so deal forth unto their little ones, and to themselves at the Lords Table: Now you know a bare name without a real thing, is a most ridiculous thing. He that hath *Name* and *Thing*, *Form* and *Power* of Godliness, he is the right man, the true Christian. Yet be it known to you and them, and all men, we are more prone to mourn over them, then to laugh at them: We look not at them with contempt, but with compassion; nor shall we bear witness against them, or your dealings out to them, in point of Church administrations, in words, which our own spirits, too prone to contempt and contumely, but which holy Scripture suggesteth in.

§ 5. And in the last place, If any thing be spoken by us unbecomming the meanness of our persons, let it be understood as it is meant, and intended against *Mr. Humphrey* onely (and those fully of his way and judgment) who hath dealt so rudely (to say the least) with our blessed Lord and Master in Heaven.

§ 6. To this work now in the Strength of God we will gird up our selves, and as he shall enable, open our mouths and speak. And yet we would speak one word more for our selves, you have laid this charge upon us to give you an account of our doings, and indeed to us properly it doth belong, for if we

spel

should not, who should? being in a Brotherhood, and Gospel communion together; And yet be it known unto you, This we do without the least reflection upon others, of whom we have an honourable account partaking of the same persons Faith with us, though not in a fellowship with us, being not perswaded in their hearts to that thing. Notwithstanding we acc. not them Saints, and so fit matter for a Church, visible Saints, yet have they not the formality of a Church till they shall joyn themselves with Gods people. Till this be, Saints they are, as is meet for us to judge, but as others do here and there and every where, scattered up and down the face of the earth, like scattered stones in the streets, or timber felled in the woods, as yet there is neither wall made up nor frame erected, to use precious *Hookers* words. But they cannot, to our seeming, make up a visible communion, nor partake of Gospel Ordinances, till they are in communion and Gospel fellowship one with another. This invisible communion by Faith makes up the Church Militant taken mystically; and it is but one in all the world. But the Church we are to attend, must be visible, so many as may comely meet in one place, who as they have the right to all ordinances, so they may enjoy the use of them in Christ His order; but these must be joynted and imbodied first, and then engage themselves as members one of another, to promote the good of the whole, or else members actually they are not, nor can they be called a *Body* any more then polished stones and hewen timber, how comely soever prepared, can be called an *House*, but when they are compacted and conjoyned together, and the whole frame reared, then it is an *House*: so when we are joyned together and walk as friends up to our rule in Gospel communion then we may be called a *Body*; And this be said to assure, we censure not others in the least that are not joyned with us, and we hope they are as far from censuring us; And so we proceed towards our work.

§ 7. Yet here also we shall promise this, That because this question more then leans, it bears hard upon a *National Church*, That we are as Jews were a Church, all holy, being *Believers, Disciples* and *Saints*, for we are baptized, we should

do but only by the Word of this point till, but that we have still thought fit to omit it, yet we crave leave humbly to give our opinion by the way and in passage only, That although we do account all *England* a Church, and every parish there may have the same denomination with the whole, being an *homogenial* part of the same; (though we think it more proper to say, A Church may be in a Parish rather then the whole Parish a Church) yet let it pass for this time, every Parish is a Church in Name, else we should make the State of *England*, as we conceive, the same with a faithless and *Pagan* State, whereunto the word of
See Chap. 6. Gods grace never came, the light of his glorious Gospel never shined: And yet we cannot think that the Church of *England*, is as the Church of the Jews was, but a great difference betwixt them, which is not a time or place here to set down, because we study brevity: But indeed our thoughts were ever since we could, through grace, give Law unto them by the Scriptures, That to be of a *National Church*, and to be of the World are equivolent terms, and of the same import: and therefore to be of such a Church (as we can pretend no more) gives us no more right to the Seales of the Covenant, then that we are of the World, but of this hereafter. Yet because your selfe Sir, and others, *Mr. Baxter* and the like, are so confident herein, That *England* is as the Jewes were, a *National Church*, and are so ready girt to dispute with whomsoever, so say you, and so saith Mr. *Baxter* in his Book for Baptisme, *I challenge any, and undertook to make good against him*, saith he, and so boastingly, for he is, as you are, a very confident man, as if he had won the field, and had been putting off his harnesse: We were saying, because you are so confident herein, and can produce Scripture to bear out your confidence, we oppose not, nor against Scripture sure, when, For with your patience, we crave leave to say, That were that we see it, only this we would humbly beg of you, That you would do your utmost to procure for us a *National Discipline*, such as the Jews had by Gods own appointment being a National Church; and the difference would be as soon ended as begun; nor need you trouble your selves with Scripture allegations,

Dis-

Diſcipline is not among us many of theſe who now crowd on with the ring to the Lords Table, being Beleevers, Diſciples and Saints in common account, ſhould be, before the next moneth come about, cut off with the rod of that Diſcipline, and more then like ſome of their Miniſters made longer by the neck, or ſhorter by the head. He that *blaſpheameth the name of the Lord, ſhall ſurely be put to death*: We hope and are confident you have none ſuch amongſt your Communicants who revile their God, piercing the honour and glory of the moſt high, and this willingly and wilfully. Yet enquire you may whether ſome of thoſe you call Beleevers, Diſciples and Saints, fear not to ſpeak *amiſs*, of this glorious and fearfull *Name*, the *Lord thy God*, blaſpheming the way of Truth, which is ſo contrary to their own: ſurely theſe would be *cut off* with the rod of that diſcipline, and tried it how you will, we believe they would be cut off. The curſed ſwearer would be cut off, in whoſe mouth that bleſſed *Name* is not heard but in ſuch oath yet being a baptized, a wilfull heathen, he may have admittance with the *Heart* to paſs on to the Lords Table: this would not be ſo, if we had that Nationall *Diſcipline*. He that preſumptiouſly, prophaneth the Lords day, and he is a *Legion*, for he is *many*, is common with theſe unmortified Beleevers, Diſciples and Saints, as is the high way, of walking in the ſtreets.

He that teſtifieth falſly againſt his Brother, the ſame Law for him, as of a Murderer; a ſin very common amongſt theſe Beleevers, Diſciples and Saints, whoſe word we muſt take, that ſuch they are, they will ſpeak truly of themſelves, though falſely of their brother.

A ſon of *Belial*, *a Glutton and a Drunkard*, a Legion too, for he is many, and helps to make up the number of theſe Beleevers, Diſciples and Saints.

Idolaters muſt come into this liſt alſo, *Deriders*, as once they were, ſo now of the Lord Chriſt and his *Word*: covetous men, *minding earthly things*.

The man that is worſe then an Infidel, muſt fall under the rod of Diſcipline too, he may hap with his life, but not without a ſharp cenſure, for he provideth no more for the ſoule

Lev. 24. 16.

Numb. 15.

3.

Deut. 19.

4.

Deut. 21.

5.

Luk. 16.

6.

of his family then he doth for the clothing the back of his Oxen and Swine; It is a question whether he knows his own soul, that it serves him for any other purpose, then to keep his body sweet: Yet put him to the question, are you a Christian? do you know Christ? do you believe in his Name he will say yes to all this, yet knows nothing of what he saith.

O Sir, but we forbear Christians without Christianity, or Christianity without Christ, Believers without Faith, Disciples, that is, followers of Christ, learners of him, and yet have learnt nothing from him; as if we should say, Disciples without Discipline, Saints in name, Swine indeed, as very Devils as *Judas* was one. We crave leave a little further to press on our suit for a *National Discipline*, for we find our spirits not a little stirred within us; when we have consulted with *Numb.* 25. and *Deut.* 13. and therewith have compared false Teachers not a few amongst us, *who thrust out of the way*, if not by your Doctrine, yet by their practice, *the Lord our God commandeth us to walk in*, we do question the matter, whether many that go for heads and guides of the people should not be hanged up before the Lord, against the Sun, had we that Discipline in force, as those were in the forementioned places. Dear Sir, help on what you can a National Discipline as you do a National Church, for you may dispute it with any man living, and carry it too, That a National Church and a National Discipline should go together; Deale with Mr. *Baxter* about this matter, and take your good friend honest Mr. *N.* to you, *vis unita fortior*, like a trebble cord, and little enough to help on this despised thing *Discipline*, yet till this be, never look to discern the face of a Church all over the Nation; that which may be seen, it will look like the sluggards field: You'l be easily entreated to this service, you would be rid of those *Vophines* and *Phinehasses*, these *Zedekiahs* and *Ahabs*, whom the King of *Babylon roasted in the fire*; you would be rid of brutish Pastors, who *seek not the Lord*; and of those Priests, who *were gone away far from the Lord*, when *Israel* went astray, following the Commandements. So then among the droves or heard of vile Priests your great Champion, for your cause would be cut off with

Cal. Inst. lib. 4. cap. 12. Ames. de Conse. cap. 29.

Jer. 29. 22.

with the rod of that Discipline, understand it how you please, he should be cut off certainly: And more than probable you would have *Simon Magus* the Believer removed too, and those revolted Disciples, who pluckt away the shoulder, and stopped their ears against the Discipline of Christ; and *Judas* the Saint discovered now, all these you would have removed; those also whose *Doctrines eat like a Cancer*; and whose Example spreadeth more then a plague sore, you would have *Demas* the worldling removed too: why endeavour what you can, that with your National Church, we may have a National Discipline, *quid enim tentasse*. If you shall forbear to do this, you are never like to see the face of your Church: And if you endeavour it, and effect it, you will finde no other disadvantage but this, which yet we hope you will not call so, you shall have fewer Fruits to profane holy things; your guests next day at the Lords Table will be fewer too, *Magus* your Believer he is gone; all the Disciples without Discipline they are gone too; *Demas* now he is discovered will not come at you, nor will your holy Brethren, holy without holiness, but they were born and baptized in *England* these will not be admitted neither, the Communicants now will be the thinner, no matter they will be the better, and the more comely for such a Table, and such a glorious presence: you little think what good you should do, if you help on a National Discipline, that we might have both, or neither, *dixi vidi*, of these things enough.

Acts 8. John. 6.

Chap. 2.

§ 1.

WE are now arrived at Baptism, which have cost the Faithful of the Lord in all ages, specially in this age, as dear as did the preaching down Circumcision cost the dear servants of the Lord in these Primitive times. *If I yet preach Circumcision* why do *I yet suffer Persecution*; then is the *Offence of the Crosse ceased*, said holy *Paul*. So let a Minister give forth Baptisme to all, he shall suffer no persecution from any, nay he shall have all friendly usage, there is not a Son or Daughter of *Belial*, not a *Nabal* in the parish, but will make

Gal. 5. 11.

him

him a Seat like a King, and give him something else beside: but if he refuse here this Rabbi, this Son of Birth will perhaps sink so far as he dare to the earth if he could; surely, this kind of people should not be pleased in this matter, if [illegible] it is more than a doubtful the Lord will be highly displeased.

§ 2. But to our question, Whether Infants of Days, being born of parents who by ignorance of the nature of Baptism, or what is figured by it, cannot be but to Faith unto them being Children in understanding, are to be admitted unto Baptism? We should for the clearing of the way resolve this question first, whether one Sacrament is of greater eminency then the other? the meaning is whether it is required of a parent in giving a reason of the hope that is in him for letting his Infant to Baptisme, then when he presents himself to the Lords Table?

The reason why we should put this question is, because we observe that Baptisme is administred by those who have not these many years given forth the Lords Supper to their people, nor to this day can be perswaded so to do. We also heartily we understand not this stage, yet we judge it not, nor can we fully approve that distinction of a near and a remote right; But this we are assured, that one Sacrament is not of greater eminency then another, and if the Infant presented by the Parent be admitted, the Parent as after should be admitted to the Lords Table, as we conceive. But let this pass, with allowance of some time for consideration, whether we have any such custome, or the Churches of Christ, grounded upon the Scriptures of God?

So now to the Question, which we shall resolve in the Negative, *That Infants of Disputants, Parents, very Children in understanding, visibly such, and born very visible, are not to be admitted to Baptism.* You that hold the Affirmative, we humbly conceive, we hold with honor. They are born in a Church, and to all Church privileges. The same with you, saith Mr. Baxter, to all its debates, (see how dangerous it is to build upon a National Church, their best support and [illegible] into the Church as Members in Infancy, must

So

So saith your worthy brother also, in his late book for Infant Baptisme, yea he saith much more, thus he saith: *How much would it conduce to the enlargement of the bounds of the Church visible to seal Infant members by Baptisme?* A little after he is pleased to give us his conceit. *I conceive it morally impossible to rivet Christian Religion into the body of any Nation, but by the way of Infant Baptisme.* So saith that worthy man, It is neither time nor place for us to say more then this here. That had his *Asteriskus* wavering and unsetled his name, shewes him to be wholly unacquainted with the Mystery of Godliness, and unstable like a weather-cock, turned with every wind: we mean, had he not been taught to speak what himselfe pleased, not another from, but the same with himselfe, he would have told him that *Paul*, a well grounded and setled man sure, took another way by his Lords appointment to *Rivet* Christian Religion in Nations and persons, and not by the way of Infant Baptisme. Christ sent me, saith he, not to Baptize (that was not my maine work *ἀναγκαῖον*, a work upon the by) but my work was to preach the Gospel, thereby to *rivet Christian Religion* in the soule and spirits of of men. Your Brother is not of this mind, for hear him out, *If Christs command be to Disciple Nations, as it is* Matth. 28. 19. *surely (to me) it implyes the practise of Infant Baptisme as the only way likely to effect it.* We may speak more to this hereafter; here only we will offer our perswasion, That your Brother mistakes his Lords command, and the way He prescribes for the *Discipling* the Nations, His command is, Goe preach unto the strong Nations. So you have it in *Mark* 16. 15. and by preaching *Disciple them*, for that is the only means to *rivet* Christ and His Religion in them, and then Baptize them, and their Infants born of *Discipled* Parents. Every thing is beautiful in its due time and order: *Disciple* them first, *Baptize* them after. The Parents must have their eyes opened first, before their Infants should have their faces sprinkled: This is our Faith, in this matter, which we hold to the more firmly, because, as we suppose, it beareth upon the Scriptures of God, and the whole tenour thereof rules this Case. And though we honour your worthy Brother

Eph. 4. 14. 2 Pet. 3. 16.

Acts. 10. 48. 1 Cor. 1. 17.

Brother very much, yet we cannot subscribe to his judgement in these matters.

Chap. 3.

But Sir, before we come to maintain the *Negative*, we take leave to set down first, how you maintain the *Affirmative*: and as you desire of us, what Scripture grounds ye have for it, for we have heard and read enough without the Book. We conceive ye have but one *Medium* whereby to prove Free Admission of all Infants to Baptism; Much more you have to say, but surely all beareth thereupon, is Collateral or Reductive thereunto, That is this.

§ 1. Free admission must be granted to all Infants: Your proofe is, They are born of Parents, born in a Church, and baptized there, and upon that score also accounted within the *Covenant*, and so have right and title to the *Seals*; being to be reputed *holy*, as to a *Federal Holiness*, an *Ecclesiastical or Church Holiness*, from the account or esteem the Church ought to have of such Children.

We crave leave to reply to this, and humbly to give our judgement, That this Argument for baptizing all Children beareth upon a false bottom, and pleadeth an high privilege from a grand mistake; if we mistake not the Scriptures there in they are the Children of *Believing Parents* both or one (so saith your worthy Brother too, *pag.* 5.) and many other places, but he may mean *Believers* at large, all such as have been baptized) who are to be reputed holy, as to a *Federal* or *Church holiness*, and upon that score admitted to baptism. The Parents one or both enter make our their interest in the Covenant of God, made with them in Christ Jesus their Lord; They can in their childs behalf plead for an outward baptism, from their inward baptism, *making answer of a good conscience toward God*, that they are washed from an *evil one*, & on their bodies

1 Cor. 7. 14. Read Mr. *Carter Inf. Bap.* 87.

1 Pet. 3. 21.

See *Bez.* Heb. 10. 22.

bodies too, from a vain conversation, *with pure water*, the *blood of Christ*; upon this account a Child comes in, and is to be purged only, as we suppose.

But now for those Parents who knows nothing of this *Covenant of Gods free grace to us by Jesus Christ*, are as very strangers to it, as are they who never heard of it, and to Jesus Christ the Mediatour of the same, deny subjection to Christ and His Discipline; will have none of Him; He of any shall not rule or teach them. We were saying, for these Parents Sons and Daughters of *Belial*, who have excommunicated, or thrown themselves out of Covenant, revolted from, forsaken or denied their own Baptism in their works and Lives, presenting now their Infants to Baptism, are not to be admitted to receive the seale thereof for them; nor is the Church to account the Children of these Parents *holy*, more then that Infant holy, which was born, and then baptized a week after the Parent was married. Such a Case you may hear of anon. Thus we have said to this point, being perswaded that so say the Scriptures of God. And so speak they also who speak and practise thereafter; whereof we have a great cloud of witnesses, too long to set down, for the time would fail us, to tell you what you may better tell us, what *Ursin*, *Beza* in his Epistles, if we remember to Arch-Bish p *Grindal*, what *Bullenger*, *Bucer*, *Calvin* have said, "as to "this free admission of the Infants of those Parents to Baptism, "who can plead no more right to the Covenant in their Infants "behalf, but that they were born in a Church, and baptized "there.

We must hear what is replied to this, That though the immediate forefathers, father or grandfather (so we may goe down as low as our first Father, who was the *Son of God*) can give no account of their Faith, yet their *Atavus*, their grandfathers father, he could give a sufficient reason of his Faith (who can tell us?) yet so you tell us; and truely it is not of light account with us, for we remember, as hath been told us, That judicious *Calvin* in his Responsary Letter to *Knox*, the head of the Scottish Nation, pleadeth free admission for *Bastards*, *Infants born of Idolaters*, *Excommunicated per-* § 2. Epist. 285.

sons.

Brother very much, yet we cannot subscribe to his judgment in these matters.

Chap. 3.

BUt Sir, before we come to maintain the *Negative*, we take leave to set down first, how you maintain the *Affirmative*: and as you desire of us, what Scripture grounds ye have for it, for we have heard and read enough without the Book. We conceive ye have but one *Medium* whereby to prove Free Admission of all Infants to Baptism; Much more you have to say, but surely all beareth thereupon, is Collateral or Reductive thereunto, That is this.

§ 1. Free admission must be granted to all Infants: Your proofe is, They are born of Parents, born in a Church, and baptized there, and upon that score also accounted within the *Covenant*, and so have right and title to the *Seals*; being to be reputed *holy*, as to a *Federal Holiness*, an *Ecclesiastical or Church Holiness*, from the account or esteem the Church ought to have of such Children.

We crave leave to reply to this, and humbly to give our judgement, That this Argument for baptizing all Children beareth upon a false bottom, and pleadeth an high privilege from a grand mistake; if we mistake not the Scriptures there in they are the Children of *Believing Parents* both or one (so saith your worthy Brother too, *pag.* 5.) and many other places, but he may mean *Believers* at large, all such as have been baptized) who are to be reputed holy, as to a *Federal* or *Church holiness*, and upon that score admitted to baptism. The Parents one or both can make over their interest in the Covenant of God, made with them in Christ Jesus their Lord; They can in their childs behalf plead for an outward baptism, from their inward baptism, *making answer of a good conscience toward God*, that they are washed from *evil ones*, & on their bodies

1 Cor. 7. 14. Read Mr. *Carter Inf. Bap.* 87.

1 Pet. 3. 21. See *B.* 24. Heb. 10. 22.

bodies too, from a vain conversation, *with pure water*, the *blood of Christ*; upon this account a Child comes in, and is to be reputed holy, as we suppose.

But now for those Parents who knows nothing of this *Covenant of Gods free grace to us by Jesus Christ*, are as very strangers to it, as are they who never heard of it, and to Jesus Christ the Mediatour of the same, deny subjection to Christ and His Discipline; will have none of Him; He of any shall not rule or teach them. We were saying, for these Parents Sons and Daughters of *Belial*, who have excommunicated, or thrown themselves out of Covenant, revolted from, forsaken or denied their own Baptism in their works and lives, presenting now their Infant to Baptism, are not to be admitted to receive the seale thereof for them; nor is the Church to account the Children of these Parents *holy*, more then that Infant holy, which was born, and then baptized a week after the Parent was married. Such a Case you may hear of anon. Thus we have said to this point, being perswaded that so say the Scriptures of God. And so speak they also who speak and practise thereafter; whereof we have a great cloud of witnesses, too long to set down, for the time would fail us, to tell you what you may better tell us, what *Ursin*, *Beza* in his Epistles, if we remember to Arch-Bish. *Grindal*, what *Bullenger*. *Bucer*, *Calvin* have said, "as to "this free admission of the Infants of those Parents to Baptism, "who can plead no more right to the Covenant in their Infants "behalf, but that they were born in a Church, and baptized "there.

We must hear what is replied to this, That though the immediate forefathers, father or grandfather (so we may goe down as low as our first Father, who was the *Son of God*) can give no account of their Faith, yet their *Atavus*, their grandfathers father, he could give a sufficient reason of his Faith (who can tell so much?) yet so you tell us; and truely it is not of light account with us, for we remember, as hath been told us, That judicious *Calvin* in his Responsory Letter to *Knox*, the honour of the Scottish Nation, pleads a free admission for *Bastards*, *Infants born of Idolaters*, *Excommunicated per-* Epist. 285. *sons*. § 2.

ſons (for that was the queſtion propoſed by that reverend man to *Calvin* for reſolution) from hence, *The promiſe is made to thouſands* [*of them that love me and keep my Commandments.*] And ſo our worthy *Bowles* moves for free admiſſion, upon the ſame ground alſo: But ſtill there is proviſion laid in, "That the Church be ſecured as to the breeding and "bringing up of theſe children, in the fear and nurture of their God „ in all this to our ſeeming, Scripture proof is wanting, though Mr. *Calvin* hath many choice things in that Epiſtle worthy our mark (we ſhall touch upon ſome anon.)

Paſt Evan.

§ 4. One thing more we read pleaded *for free admiſſion to baptiſm*, by your Brother; *It would make a marvellous addition to the Church: what an huge company of viſible Saints ſhould we have, if this LEAVEN of Infant Baptiſm* (ſo he calls it) *were ſpread over the Nation?*

Truely (and give us leave to ſpeak our mind) we can neither pray to God, nor praiſe God for the ſpreading of this *Leaven*: being perſwaded there is ſcarce a Godly Man in the Nation, that thinks not this *Leaven* ſpreads faſt enough. And for the *addition* it makes to the *Church*, it is not, we conceive, conſiderable with him; it is rather an *addition* to the *World*; yet, if ye will have it a Church, it is (make the beſt of it, which is naught) but a *National Church* there, a huge bulky body, a Monſter rather then a Church; and truely as we verily think, a Godly Man can never attend nor intend the growth thereof; for the more hugely it grows, the more monſtrous it is: and who will regard the growth of Monſters? He intends the growth and increaſe of the Church of *the living God*; and dayly prayeth that the *ſpirit of life and of glory* by the word of *His power and grace* would dayly make an *addition* thereunto: for he is perſwaded, we think upon Scripture ground, that Infant Baptiſm will never do it, never make viſible Saints while the world ſtands.

We have offered our perſwaſion a little before, we will tell you our fear here before we cloſe this Chapter, which is,

1. That theſe expreſſions to our ſeeming are very unſcripturel, *Infant Baptiſm rivets Chriſtian Religion in the Body of a Nation*, that is, as we underſtand it, *in the ſouls and ſpirits of men.*

men: and makes a marvellous addition to the Church. We were speaking our heart, that these expressions serve only to hold and keep *POPERY* within us, which is so natural to us, being born with us, as our flesh is; being *rivetted* and *written in the heart*, as with *a pen of IRON*, and *with the point of a DIAMOND*. Such sayings as these serve to bring us (natural Papists as we are) into a *fools Paradise*, as we use to say, making us believe we are *Christians indeed*, when as indeed we are but *washed heathens*, and that Christian Religion is *rivetted* in us by Baptism, wherein *being grafted into*, for the effecting of so glorious a work, as is the riveting Christian Religion in the heart, it rivets nothing but *Popery* there, and as gross Popery as any we can readily think of, and serves only, as we think, being addressed upon that conceit, to enlarge the bounds of that *malignant Church*, or if you like the other word better, the *National*.

2. But Reader, To speak a word to thee in passage, seek to taste these words, before thou dost swallow them, least thou should'st be *driven* thereby according to the bent and inclination of thy own spirit, to make that Sacrament an Idol; and to think, That grace *rivetted* in thy soul, because water was sprinkled upon thy Body. In so thinking, thou dost ascribe that to water which is proper *to Christ*; *Grace is Gods creature only*; The God of all grace by His Spirit with His Word (in persons grown up) works it in the heart, and rivets it there. All the Creatures in Heaven and Earth cannot enter the least dram of Grace; It is a thing of Gods making and preserving; It is a Creation. And we think this worthy man will grant all this; That the spirit of grace with the word of His Grace preached, doth *rivet* Christian Religion in the body of the Nation, and in the soul of a person, and so *addes him to the Church*: for the spirit only doth reach the heart, and rivet grace there: This *riveting Religion*, we conceive to be some inward work, upon the inward man, which cannot be done by water which reacheth the face only.

3. These expressions seem to us to cast much blame, if not reproach and shame upon some godly Ministers, as is meet for us to judge of them, who conscientiously refuse to Baptize all

Infants, and so to spread this Leaven over the Nation, thereby to *revive Christian Religion in the body thereof*. They cannot do this, fearing they should pervert the righteous ways of the Lord, and charge of His Church, *Go and Disciple them first, and then Baptize*.

Which command teacheth the godly Ministers now, as we suppose, and bids them look to it, That those Parents be the Disciples of Christ, whose Infants they receive into the Church, and as Ministers of Christ, implant into *His Body*. But now these Ministers refusing so to do, this your Brothers Expression chargeth them very deeply, as we conceive; That they envy the growth of the Church, and that a daily *addition* should be made thereunto, which we should speak tremblingly being so contrary to their holy minds, for they have *the mind of Christ*.

4. Nay to adde this more, if this be to be approved of, that this *Leaven* of Baptism hath this power and virtue in it, we must approve of that old usage among us (when grosse darkness covered the Nation, and Popery did *stagnare*, all the Land was but as a *stinking bog there*) which we have heard, and one of us have read, *That if the Infant were at the point of death, and more then probable the soul would depart out of the body, before the water could be drawn out of the Well, then they thought fit to tumble the Infant into the well, that it might be washed before it died.*

5. Once more, for we take it to be a matter of infinite concernment. If this can be made good, that there is such vertue in this *Leaven*, and the spreading thereof all over the Nation (for as that spreads, religion spreads) Then let not this Nation onely, but all the world hasten themselves with their Children unto Baptism, thereby they shall be all *added* to the Church, and Religion shall be riveted in them; A glorious thing! For we cannot but think that this *Leaven* may be as quick in *working* upon grown folk, as it is in *operation* upon *Infant Children* (to remember you only of that witty distinction about *Pepper*, the same between *Asia* and *Asia*)

6. But if this Temptation means like to attain his end, he will bring

bring as many as shall believe as we do, up to that practise of Infant Baptisme. He were a woful Parent, who having Religion rivetted in himselfe by his Infant Baptism, would withhold his poor Infant from it. But to be, if it may be, more serious in this matter; Ask we now of this generation of men grown up; and of that now *rising up in their Fathers stead, an increase of sinfull men*, and *see with our eyes, and hear with our ears*, that is, diligently observe and mark, they are all baptized every one of them, *do they walk as these* that had *Religion rivated in them by their Infant Baptism?* or doth not *the show of their countenance* witness against this, *declaring their sin as Sodom, and hiding it not?* We leave this to the godly wise to consider of it, and determine.

To shut up, The godly and wise have observed, That the Anabaptists, some of them, perhaps not a few, though many of them, we doubt not, *fear God above many*, yet some of them place all their Religion here, as once their forefathers did in *Circumcision*; And may they not take advantage by these words, and be more encouraged in their way? which is as cross to this good mans scope and intendment, as are his forementioned words unto the Truth as it is in Jesus.

7. Surely this worthy man hath not taken a course to gain his erring Brethren; And others we fear, not halfe so conscientious as they, will take an occasion to put a sense upon his words, and without any wresting of them, as is quite cross to his drift and pious intention. For to our seeming, these two expressions of his, together with two or three more toward the end of his book, which we shall, together with his again, meet with anon after, in our sixth Treatise, are very unscripturall (as we said) and may serve to promote Superstition, together with abominable practises in and about Baptism, giving more to it then God allows us in his Word to give, which *we unlearned* and *unstable*, and for the most part of us, as *natural brute beasts*, cannot but do without such words as these, which may help and encourage us to so do. We need even the best of us, if we can plead no more for our Christ an Religion rivetted in us, but that we were baptized, some godly Minister, that would deal as plainly, and as faithfully

fully with us, as *Peter* dealt with *Simon Magus*, Act. 8. 23. *I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity, though thou art baptized.* The man thought not so, he was wholly ignorant of all this, he did not know his own condition, flattered himself, and thought all well, because lately sprinkled with the water of Baptism. No more.

And so much, that you may not be deceived (for the deceit is doubly) in a matter of so high concernment. We have told you our thoughts of, and godly jealousie about your Brothers words. The considerate Reader may make this use of all this, To attend all *Gods appointments*; and in the conscionable use and improvement hereof, intend and bend after *Baptism within upon the heart*, made *without hands by fire and the holy Ghost*, Whereby Christian Religion is riveted into the body of a Nation, and soul of a Person, *Amen.*

Chap. 4.

WE have heard as much, as we believe was ever heard definitively spoken for the holding out you Affirmative, though indeed it is acknowledged to be but his own own conceit; and yet what is mans conceit in Gods matters? Come we now to ask Counsel at our *Abel*, and so, if it were possible, *end the matter*, whether your Affirmative or our Negative relies upon the surest grounds, the Scriptures of God? We hold to the Negative, That this bare privilege of being born in a Church doth not instate or interest the Infant to Church privileges; we shall argue it with you, as sometimes we have done among our selves for our own satisfaction. And so we shall tell you only our perswasion as you commanded us, and what hath inclined us thereunto. Thus we have argued the case amongst our selves.

§ 1. An Infidel or Pagan may come into *England*, a Church you are, and may dwell into your Parish of ours, as true a

Church

Church as whole *England* is: for every *homogeneal* part has the ſame denomination with the whole; *England* a Church, ſo is every Pariſh alſo, (a Church in the Pariſh we deny not) And therein may this Infant be born of Infidel or Pagan Parents. You will not ſay now that Baptiſm belongs to this Infant by birth-priviledge. No, you will ſay, for there is a vaſt difference, it not a gulf betwixt a *Chriſtian* Infant and a *Pagan* Infant.

Pardon us, good Sir, we cannot yeild you that, for that the difference may be on the Pagans ſide, and ſo the Pagan the better man, or not ſo bad as the Chriſtian. The Pagan not waſhed on the face; the Chriſtian not waſhed on the heart. The Pagan not baptized with water; the Chriſtian not baptized with the *holy Ghoſt* and with *fire*; he knows not what it is, nor does he ask after it. Chriſtian is a glorious name; but without Chriſt it is an horrible ſhame. *Nomen inane crimen immane*, was, you know the old ſaying, *an empty name a huge crime*.

* A Chriſtian name given to an unchriſtian man, is like a Iewel in the Snout of a Swine. *Sat. de pro Book*

But let us not paſs over this was laſt ſaid, The difference is on the Pagans ſide, he is the better man, or if not better, where neither is good, yet the Pagan is not halfe ſo bad a man as the Chriſtian is, having no other plea for his Chriſtianity than that he is born in *England*, for he is worſe then an Infidel; and ſo we ſhall argue in the ſecond place. 3.

Suppoſing it granted, that the Infant enters this priviledge by the Parents Charter; The Pagan Infant is refuſed becauſe the Parent was a Pagan; The Chriſtian Infant is received becauſe the Parent is a Chriſtian; This is not juſt now according to the mind of God expreſſed in the Scriptures (as we underſtand them) that in the matters of God, and concernments of Chriſt, there muſt be no accepting of perſons; but here the Pagan Infant is rejected, though he was born in *England*, becauſe born of a Pagan Parent; The Chriſtian Infant is accepted, and for no other reaſon, but becauſe his Father is a Chriſtian; what though, it is but in Name; for indeed he *is worſe then an Infidel*; The Apoſtle doth inſtance but in one groſs ſin, *If any man provide not for his own, he hath denied the faith*, and *is worſe then an infidel*. It holds true (ſaith § 2. 1 Tim. 5. 8.

(saith worthy *Bongesius*) as of that sin, so of any other grosse sin; he is a Christian, a Believer, a Disciple, a Saint, he was born in *England* and baptized there, yet a Drunkard, a Lyar, a Swearer, a Sabbath breaker, a Covetous person, an Idolater, now he hath denied his faith (which he made some little shew of) and is worse then an Infidel: worse I, yea by many degrees worse. Because he sinneth against more light and knowledge, as also against more holy obligations, and bonds, which are in the Christian Religion. Thus it is cleared from the Scriptures, that a Christian without Christ is worse then a Pagan that never heard of Christ.

We have heard, that this hath troubled the Ministers of Christ very much, whether baptism belongs to Children because born in a Church, though born in adultery? Excellent *Knox* was much perplexed about this, and writes to *Calvin* about it, as you may see it *Epist* 283. for he found the people very impetuous and storm-like about this matter. *Baptism for their Children*, as now we do; We will set you down but one passage, when we have first set down his words, which immediately follow; *Calvin* having straightly charged them with this, that in the case aforesaid, they take *faithful sureties* to stand in the stead of these ungodly Parents, adds these words or to this purpose. *This indulgence we grant, our times so requiring, for we are, the Lord knows, but peeping out of the mist or fog of Popery, and the Church, as we may say but in her Infancy, & therfore* indulgendum est latius, saith he, *we must give more liberty then else we would do.* Now take the words we were setting down, *Nihil magis præpostorum. There is nothing more preposterous and quite besides the rule, then that those should be Sacramentally ingraffed into Christs body, of whom we have not the least hope they will ever become the Disciples of Christ, Not the least hope:* Why? may we not conceive hope, that the Child baptized may prove a Disciple of Christ? (to help out *Calvin* words as we can) we reply, that as the Parent may be, and as commonly he is the same we spake of even now, a Christian without Christ, a Believer without Faith, worse then an Infidel, because he *forteth at naught all Gods counsel, and will none of his reproofs,*

Epist. 284. *Amst.* of *Consc.* cap. 27. 7. 8.

he turns his back upon the means whereby the holy ſpirit conveyeth Himſelf into the heart and works faith there, we have not the leaſt hope, that ever the child of ſuch a Parent will become a Diſciple. For how ſhall we ground our hope? or whereon? we queſtion not what the Lord may do, nor dare we reach into his *decree*; we muſt walk by the rule of his *word*, ſo ſpeak and ſo judge; and then what hope, that a Parent *worſe then an Infidel* can or will order his child ſo, as that he may become a Diſciple of Chriſt, *quod avis tale illud* &c. he muſt be a Diſciple that makes a Diſciple. But he that is worſe then an Infidel will make his Child a Believer, when thornes bear grapes, thiſtles figs, or when a Lioneſs makes her young ones Lambs. Alas the Child grows up in the ſight of a filthy converſation, and ſeldome hears the name of Chriſt but in an oath, and ſo as the Pſalmiſt ſaith, and *Hieron.* alſo *ſo ſoon as he can go, he goes aſtray, and ſo ſoon as he can ſpeak he ſpeaks lyes and oaths*, as bad and worſe, in that can he, and more deboyſed then the Parents; We know this ſounds harſh, *worſe then an Infidel*, but how dare we be offended at it, when ſad experience tells us, there are no worſe Heathens in the world then are Heathen Chriſtians. Oh what poyſonful Creatures are there where the Sun beams fall from its vertical point in the Summer Solſtice! and as poyſonful perſons are there, where the Son of the Goſpel ſhineth forth in its ſtrength, yet puts not forth ſtrength enough, to ſubdue and conquer theſe poyſonful ones; None in all the world worſe then theſe, none halfe ſo bad; Sodomites and worſe, becauſe living under the means which ſhould make them better; *twice dead, plucked up by the root, naturally* dead in ſin, *judicially* dead under wrath, becauſe he *deſpiſeth the riches of Gods goodneſs, and after his hardneſs, and impenitent heart treaſureth up unto himſelfe wrath, againſt the day of wrath*. And ſo much to prove this Chriſtian without Chriſt, this Believer without Faith to be worſe then an Infidel; therefore can plead no more right to his Infants Baptiſm then a Pagan can. We proceed. Pſal. 58.

In the third place we muſt acknowledge, we cannot learn from Scripture, That the Infant of a Chriſtian Parent hath as §3.

true a title to Baptism as he hath to his birth right: or take it thus if you please, *That Baptism is a Child's birthright*; he or she is born unto it, because born in *England*. The tenoure of the Scripture, we think rules not the Case so; we[l] understood it thus, and so we have been taught by our godly and learned Ministers, That we are born to nothing, but a sup of sorrow, to the breach of affliction, and to the waters of adversity, and these we are inflated in, yea possessed of, as soon as we are born, for we are born as a *wild Asses colt*, a beast, and the wildest of beasts. Indeed *vain man*, empty man, as the Devils house was (for his house is he) thinks not so, for he would be wise, and would be accounted clean also, though he be filthy and noysome all over, yea more filthy then if covered over with his own dung.

Job. 11. 12.
Mat. 12.

You may say this makes for you, for if this Infant be so filthy as filthiness it selfe, the more need it should be presented to that *Fountain of Christ, His Blood opened for sin and for uncleanness*: For doubtless that *Jordan of Christs* blood serves onely to wash unclean ones; and *fountains* are as suitable and desirable to such filthy and unclean ones as they are to *thirsty* ones; All this we grant you heartily, yet we humbly conceive it serves not your purpose; for thus we argue.

If this unclean Infant hath right to Baptism as its birth priviledge upon this ground onely, because it is unclean, the Pagan Infant born in the Church hath as good right too, for that is as unclean also. Therefore we humbly conceive it to be thus, The Infant hath a right to baptisme, from, as we may say, his Fathers Charter, he is born of a faithful Parent, one or both; Now let his Parent shew that, which certainly he cannot do, being worse then an Infidel. And indeed the time was, when the Parent was questioned at this point, to give *an account of his Faith*, or a *reason of his hope*, and upon that account the Child was admitted to Baptism. A laudable custome, saith Mr. *B.* and how desirous is he it might be brought into use again, and acquitted from the abuses of it. Indeed this was our dear Saviours manner, when the Tabernacled here on earth, he ever questioned the Parent, Woman

doth

lost how believe? Man can't *then believe?* and yet like enough the children were old enough, though they might not be in case to answer for themselves. But,

This is it we would argue from hence, That it is not the uncleanness of the Infant that gives it right to Baptism, but the true knowledge the *Parent* hath of this uncleanness, his own in the first place, and then of his Infants uncleannesse issuing from him, wherewith he hath more then besmeared his Infant all over, within and without, but specially within; now if the *Parent* can give no reasonable account of this, he make no more account of Baptism for his Child, then a dunghill cock doth of a Jewel, or a swine doth of a *Pearle*; what regard hath he to a Fountain, that is in his own conceit neither *unclean* nor *thirsty*, though yet he will have water sprinkled upon his Child, for that is the manner of the Country; But we humbly conceive, as preposterous and as clean besides the rule, as if the Apostles should have baptized the Nations first, and then make them Disciples when they can, which is seldom or never done, where the righteous wayes of the Lord are perverted, and that great Ordinance and Appointment of God for conversion slightingly stepped over, and those other his Appointments for the support of his poor and meek ones, hasted after and pressed unto, so that indeed they *suffer violence*, and the wicked would if they could, take them by force, were they not dealt forth unto them.

In the fourth place it is urged, why any more in distinction here in admitting to Baptism, then there was among the Jews in admission to Circumcision; There was no difference betwixt the precious and the vile. § 4.

To this we say, that surely there was a distinction; for as they were a National Church, so they had a National Discipline, whereof we heard, and what we did be done, did it take place among us: there would not be such bearing up to the *Font*, nor pressing on to the *Table* by dogs and swine. But we would adde this, there was a separation. The Leaper was to cry out *unclean, unclean*, and to dwell alone, *without the Camp must his habitation be.* Y. a *while any mans uncleanness was upon him, he must not come to the Sanctuary*, not deal Lev. 13. 45. Numb. 5. 2, 3.

deal in holy things; such care was taken for the keeping of the Sanctuary, clean from all bodyly and legal polutions; surely it tells the Stewards in Gods house what they are to do. But we proceed, holding fast to our conclusion, from that which is premised, That Nominate Believers and Titular Disciples, and falsly called Saints are worse then Infidels, Therefor can plead no right to that publick seale of the Church-Baptism to their Children.

§ 5. We conceive it may be said here, why should the Child suffer or be punished for the *Parents* sin? The Parent is worse then an Infidel, what is that to the Child?

Very much say we as to these high matters. And indeed it looks like a judgement upon the Child to be born of a Pagan Parent, who never heard of Christ Jesus the Lord; But a greater judgement it is to be born of a Christian Parent in a *land of vision*, and yet so far from learning Christ to know Him, and to gain salvation by Him, that he turns his back upon Him, maketh light of Him, bids defiance to Him. *That man shall not rule over him*: Who then? any but he. A sore judgement to be born of such Parents. Yet we conceive the Infant suffers not, nor doth the Parent, because he may not be admitted to Baptism, the publick seal of the Church, no more then that same Parent should suffer from the Church (gives us leave to yeild you the name of a Church) if so be that *ultimum fulmen Ecclesiæ*, as we have heard *Calvin* calls *Excommunication* the last *remedy* and *thunderbolt* of the Church, be thundered out against him in *delivering him unto Satan*, in stead of admitting him with his Infant to Baptism; for though it may be called a Punishment, yet in no other sense then is a corrosing playster to a wounded man, or the cutting off a part for the saving of the whole: the case requiring it, This hath a tendency to the greatest good that is imaginable, *for the destruction of the flesh, that the spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord*: But this is our perswasion till we are farther informed: that the Infant hath no wrong, none at all, nor the Parent neither, but greatly righted are they both, if the Parent could see it, the Church refusing to set its seal to a blank, and keeping off this foul and nasty creature (who delights in his filthiness

thinesse as the swine in the mire) from rushing upon this holy *Name and Thing*, having all his uncleannesse upon him, but knows it not. Sacraments profaned through ignorance and prophannesse the child of that darknesse have as deadly a work upon the soul, as the word of *life* hath, being tendered unto us and rejected of us. That is deadly poyson, and kills presently, which is mingled with wine; It kills but not so presently, being mingled with water. And therefore we crave leave to proceed in our Arguments, and then by Caution you, for so much we hope may be allowed of Godly jealousie, touching you, so mean though we are, and so much below you, seeing you declare your selfe to be of Mr. *H.* perswasion.

In the sixth place thus we argue from *John* the Baptists example worthy our imitation sure, onely let it be remembred still, That we have to do with the Parents, not with the Infants; Thus we read, *Many of the Pharisees and Sadducees came to his Baptisme*, the very best men in the Country and Parish, both for learning and manners, the very cream and flower there, in common esteem as far exceeding your commonly called Beleevers, Disciples, and Saints, as a compleat Scholar doth an arrant Clown, or a neat Gentleman a Shepherd; These compleated ones in their own eyes, and sight of others, come to *Johns* Baptisme, others are baptized by him, and why not they? And it is his very work and businesse. Now you can tell us what welcome they had, the very same, we think, those Parents should have coming to present their tender Babes to Baptisme, when they themselves return to their *folly*, as the *dog to his vomit*. *O generation of vipers*, you are as full of poyson as any serpent is, and do you come to me with all this poyson within you, and willing to keep it there? *O generation of vipers*, do you come to be baptized into Christ, and are haters of Christ, and anon after will be Murtherers of Him? *O generation of vipers*, dare you come to be washed in the blood of Christ, and know not in the least measure what that blood meaneth, nor what meaneth your own blood; *The Blood of Christ is our righteousnesse, our own blood is our wickednesse or filthynesse*: you know none of

§ 6.

Mat. 3.

all this, and now will you know, what make you here? Behold the customs of the country, you have this in your eye also, you think sometimes there is a *wrath to come*, indeed there is: you think too, you can take Sanctuary at this Ordinance, and so shelter your selves from it, it shall not reach you. *Toto cœlo erratis* (if we may use the proverb) ye are heavenly wide here, utterly mistaken, which being not corrected in time, will bring you to utter darkness anon. Baptisme is but an *imaginary Sanctuary*, like the rich mans wealth, *a strong City and an high Wall, all this but in his own conceit*. It will no more shelter you from wrath (rather expose you more unto it) then can the *caul* of the *heart* defend the heart from the paw of a Lyon, or a Bear robbed of her whelps. Nay assure your selves that as that gloriously strong, that Almighty everlasting Arm, such as faithful people, who put no confidence in the flesh finde it to be, when flesh is shrunk up to nothing, underneath everlasting Arms, this Almighty Arm proves but a staff of a Reed, a very rottennesse to every man that leanes to the Arm, while he cleaves to his sin: so is the Ordinance of Baptisme (indeed such is every Ordinance leaned unto, for Christ is the onely *leanyo* of His people) leaned upon, and run unto as a Sanctuary; there is no flying from the *wrath to come* in that way yeare in, not any means to escape it, but by flying to him, whose wrath it is, beseeching him for his great names sake to remove wrath, and to take you into his favour, after he hath given you repentance *unto life*, and *faith in his dear Son*. But be it known unto you, that you be not mistaken in my office: I baptize none, no not one, that turns his back upon my Doctrine, *preaching repentance*, and I hear him first confessing his sins, not as your Confessors do barely, confessing their sins every day, and live in them every hour: I make him make proof thereof, that may satisfie a charitable judgement, that there is as much fire as will enable a weak, a little strength, as much as a bruised reed hath. Assuring him there is no salvation without *repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*. You have heard what *John* the Baptist did: But we will adde nothing of our own in this place, for we consider as the man

Mat. 3.6.
Acts 19.4.

is

is, such is his strength: and of such account are his words: you will, we doubt not, observe what town, city, how little soever you observe us.

We pass on, and thus we reason from *Mat.* 7. 6. *Give not that which is holy unto the dogs, neither cast ye your Pearles before Swine.* We humbly conceive that the Scripture is not to be restrained to this or that Ordinance, but to be understood of all Ordinances forbidden to be dispensed to such as are here called Dogs and Swine, excepting that Ordinance only, which is able thorow God, of Dogs to make us Disciples, of Swine, Sheep: It is them, as we think you call it, one of your *Topick places*, from the less to the greater: or *a fortiori*. If the Pearles of Instruction are not to be given unto Dogs and Swine, that is, profane persons, men or women (two footed (wine the worst (wine) who hate the reprover in the Gate, will turn again and rent him, and trample his Pearl (whereof he is the Minister, *and therefore called your Pearls*, and *their words*) under their feet: If these Pearles must not be given to such unworthy ones as these: what warrant have the Ministers of Christ to give forth this Seal of the Covenant, to Infants born of those Parents, who know nothing of the Covenant, and nothing will they know, having made a Covenant with Death, and with Hell are they at agreement. § 7. Joh. 17. 20. Isa. 28. 15.

You shall say that we speak too rudely of your Beleevers, Disciples and Saints in likening them to Dogs and Swine, we crave leave to ask you this question, did you ever question them about it? if you say yes, then what was their Answer? were they Dogs and Swine, or were they not? If they say they were such (by Nature) but now are not such (by Grace) the word of his grace, together with the Spirit of God and of glory hath converted them, and wrought a change in them, not of Actions only, but of Nature, then are we so far from calling them Dogs and Swine, that we call them the *Excellent* of the *Earth*, Beleevers indeed, Disciples and Saints in truth: only you must not take their bare *say so* herein, but bid them make it out, bid them speak, that you may see them, the truth of their words, in their works: They may say so, Rev. 29.

and

and may blaspheam in so saying; But now if you shall say you never put them to this Question, you cannot think that they can be *dog* and *swine*, who were born in *England* and baptized there; nor will you ever go about to make them think it to be so, being so incongruous and disagreeing to reason, and so contrary to our own Counsels; then you have omitted a main and principle duty (whereof more) the discovering to them the *horrid state of Nature*; and that they are *Dogs* and *Swine* at present, if they never were such in their own account and esteem, beholding themselves wallowing like that *cast out Infant*, which represents all mankind in their natural condition, *in their blood*; or like unto a Carrion lying in a ditch under the power of a lust within *in wickedness*, and that *wicked one* without. Certain it is, if we never were in our account, and as in our selves considered, Dogs and Swine, then such as are at present Dogs and Swine, as sure as *Pharaoh* was a Dragon, *Herod* a Fox, and *Nero* a Lyon; yea as sure as you have Dogs and Swine in your Parish properly called so; But to put it out of doubt, and that you may resolve your selfe therein, observe well how they deal with the *Pearle*, whether like Swine they trample it not under foot: and like Dogs *turn again* and *rent* the dispensers of the same. Therefore we are where we were, and we have Scripture warrant to keep those to it, as we conceive; if a Minister must not cast his Pearles, his Exortations before Dogs and Swine, which will but trample upon them, *contradicting and blaspheming*: Then must he not suffer the *glorious treasure of the Church*, where she findeth and whence she fetcheth all that is needful, the *Blood of God man*, of the Lord Jesus Christ, the foundation of the Covenant, to be trampled under foot by Dogs and Swine, comming now to receive the seal thereof, for the Infant, and to be sprinkled with it, if they had known wherefore they came.

Ez. 16.
Joh. 1. 5. 20.

§ 8. We would argue this from that known place hinted before, *Mat.* 28. 19. *Go ye* in the name of God and power of his might and *teach all nations, baptizing them*: that is, as you know much better then we, for we have it but by hear say, go ye and *Disciple them*, make them stoop to my teachings:

Mat. 28. 19.

to

to ſubmit and ſubject themſelves to my *Goſpel*, good tidings from Heaven, that all is peace there, and an attonement is made an accepted for all and every one, that is made obedient *thereunto by word and deed, Go ye and Diſciple them*, that you know is the import of the word. Hence then we argue, That a Miniſter ought to *Diſciple* the Parent firſt, before he doth baptize his Infant, that is, Indoctrinate him, in the knowledge of Chriſt crucified, made a Curſe for him to redeem him from the curſe of the Law, by the merit of his ſufferings, and blood ſhed upon the Croſs: this is to be done firſt (as we ſuppoſe, and our perſwaſion is) and he muſt be examined how this doctrine takes with him, what ſubmiſſion he gives thereunto, and whether his life be thereafter.

You will ſay, *Were theſe an heathen people, and never heard of the Goſpel till now, then ſo I would do*, Diſciple *them before I* Baptize *their Infants*; *But now I ſuppoſe them* Diſcipled *already, and well Taught, Trained and Catechiſed Men and Women.*

With your favour and patience, who bid you ſuppoſe this? That theſe are *Diſcipled* already. *Suppoſito quod non debet ſupponi obſtrait operationem verbi*, as we ſuppoſe you have heard, and your experience may tell it you every day. You will ſay again, *We muſt put a vaſt difference betwixt Heathen Men and Chriſtian Men.*

No indeed, not we, further then our Lord commands us. We are bold to ask you what difference? There are Heathen without the Goſpel, here are Heathen with the Goſpel; what difference? There are a dark people, groſs darkneſs covereth them, for the glorious Sun of the Goſpel never *beam'd forth* upon them. There are yet a darker people, as certainly a darker may be, dark as darkneſs it ſelfe, under the *beamings forth* of Goſpel light; what difference? No ſuch darkneſs as to be darkened with the Goſpel light: To be an *Egypt* in *Goſhen*, a *Sodom* in *Jeruſalem*, a *Gomorrha* in *Judea*: all amounts but to this, to be darkneſs in the midſt of the light: To have light, and yet to act as men in the dark; To walk in darkneſs under Goſpel light; to be night at that place and climate of Heaven, where the Sun of the Goſpel is at her *high*

Noon: what difference? The Heathen are a dark people *without light*, These are a dark people *with light*; what difference? The Heathen sit in darkness, and in the shadow of death, and see no light, whereby to see their way to Christ, and in that
Acts 17. 27. state they *grope after God*, and will be left inexcusable if they find him not. These sit so too, but in the sight of light, the *Sun* of this Gospel shining round about them. O the dreadful difference between these two strong Nations, the one dark without light, the other dark with light, and because
Joh. 3. 20. they are in love with darkness, their deeds being evil, chasing
Job 24. 17. the light from them, and so rebel against it: The fearful threatning of the Lord hath taken hold of these, which maketh the difference dreadful, *Deut.* 28. 29. thou *shalt grope at noon day* (when the light is double) as *the blind gropeth in darkness*. From this terrible judgement the Lord deliver us. It is visible upon your National Church.

Why? but these do profess well: yea, but observe, do they live well? We hope they do: yea, but you must have a ground for your hope, which you have of them, and have in your selfe. They say well, and give me *good words*, yea, but do they do well, and shew you their *good deeds*? They are visible Christians: It is much if they be so, but he that is a visible Christian, barely so, and no more, may shortly cease to be so much *as visible*. Doubtless if he be Gold within, he is Silver without: his outside is good, but his inside is better, all glorious within, and see how he sparkleth *without*: If he be a *light burning, he will be a light shining*. There is a fire of zeal for God, and Christ, and Grace, and against all that is contrary to all this, and all this will appear in a conversation shining before Men. O dear Sir, look well to your *Believer*, whether he hath faith or no: and to your *Christian*, whether he hath any Christ or no, unless a false one: and to your *Disciple*, whether he hath learnt of his Master, and what Proficient he is in *his School*: and to your *Saint*, whether he hath any more holiness but what you call *Federal*: He was born and baptized in *England*, and can make full proofe thereof, if need be, from the Church Book: that is all.

Be we assured that such a Saint, that can hold forth his Saint-

ship

ſhip no other way, but as aforeſaid, will prove a Divel anon, if ſo be he be not one already. O remember what God doth conjoyn, we muſt not diſ-joyn: We pray you Sir, put theſe queſtions unto him, before mentioned, we ſay theſe, becauſe theſe properly relate to the reſolution of the controverſie between us: as he anſwereth to theſe, and giveth you to underſtand he hath a little more underſtanding then hath the Horſe or the Mule; you may admit his Infant, or you may forbear: the Lord will inſtruct you to diſcretion, if you are not too reſolved of your way, and will ſeek unto him: onely as we ſaid, take not a ſingle witneſs in theſe matters. We will argue the point no further, for there would be no end, and we ſee our papers fill apace; the Judge of all the World be Judge betwixt us, to His Judgement we appeal and muſt ſtand.

Chap. 5.

§ 1. WE crave leave in the next place humbly, to give our opinion, about adminiſtring of Baptiſm, in a caſe of more doubtful conſtruction then is the former; for to us as you have read, there is no doubt at all. This is the caſe; whether a Godly Miniſter walking with his people in Goſpel fellowſhip, may baptize the Infant of a godly Parent, in charity judged ſo to be, preſenting it unto him, but not walking with him in the ſame Fellowſhip or Communion? We muſt take in here, what was hinted before, and withall the words of excellent *Calvin* we made ſome mention of: we muſt diſtinguiſh betwixt a *Church in its Infancy, and at its full growth*, which may alter the caſe a little: But this we humbly conceive, and ſo we give our opinion, That a godly Parent ſhould not offer his Infant to a godly Miniſter to be baptized by him, while the Parent refuſeth to walk with the ſaid Miniſter in Goſpel fellowſhip, according to the command of God, and rule of his word. But keepeth aloof off, and apart from Gods people, giving no help unto them, but lieth ſcattered with others, not a few like poliſhed ſtones in the Quarr, and hewen timber, which are proper materials for a houſe, yet make no

house, as to the form and fashion of it. Members must be conjoined and compacted before they make a body. Now he that will withhold his help from the body (as he must needs do, who stands apart from it, will not join to it, and so give no more service to the body, then if he were further off in the remotest parts of the world) we think it comely at the least, he should not offer his Child to be baptized by the said Minister, if he can have it done without scandal at another place. But if you Sir, or any of your brethren, be otherwise minded, it matters not, God will reveal to you and us, even this also; In the mean time think of us, as charity binds you, that we would not do any thing whereby to give the least offence to any Godly person; much more may be said to that was aforesaid, but it is not suitable to this place, and more unsuitable to the season.

§ 2. In the last place, let it not argue boldness from us, but tenderest love to you, and dear respect to our duty, while we *Caution* you in Gods name, and as you look to give up your account with joy, to consider the premises, and bid the people beware they do not take Baptism to be the *form of a Church*, for that is down right Popery, as you know full well (you may be an occasion of this before you are aware) But we pray you make your people to know it. We are all Papists by Nature, and carry a Pope in our bosome next the heart. And marvellously contented we are with a *form*, letting the *power* go not worth the looking after. Popery still, the very *Dalilah*, the dearly beloved of our Souls; do your utmost, we beseech you, to drive your people out of a *form*, they cleave as fast to it, as the flesh cleaves to them. And from glorying in empty names, which yeild empty comforts, in outward priviledges, having gained no inward grace by them; and from that vain boast, *they have the means of grace*, when wholly careless of getting grace by those means. We think they should not receive *Baptism* from your hands, who will not receive the *word of his grace* from your mouth. Tell them of en, as your duty we think is to do, what a dreadful thing it is, *to be dead while we live*, living a *natural life*, and dead to a *spiritual life*, as all they are, that live in plea-

sure

ſure ſo pleaſing to the fleſh: Tell them what a dreadful thing it is to have *ſimular ſanctity*, and *real impiety*; to have a *name to live* when *they are dead*. And may it pleaſe you to ground them well in the firſt principle of *Catechiſm*, *Mans miſery by ſin*, and what *loſt Creatures* they are without Chriſt. *Aliens from the Commonwealth of Iſrael, ſtrangers from the Covenant of Promiſe: without hope* grounded, ſure and ſtable; a hope *well ſet*, will *ſettle us*; a *hope* that is the Saints *Anchor-hold*, without ſuch a hope, without *God in the World*; And charge them not to reſt upon a Chriſt without them, and to be reſtleſs in their ſpirits, till they have a Chriſt within them. Teach them to know the infinite evil that is in ſin, ſo may they know the infinite good that is in a Chriſt, and of forgiveneſs through the *merits of his blood*. Tell them that ſin known and felt to be above meaſure ſinful, renders Chriſt and all with Him in full meaſure welcome, altogether *lovely* or *deſirous*. Make them underſtand their *filthineſs*, and you need not bid them *waſh and be clean*; The fountain of Chriſts blood is as welcome to the *filthy ſoul* that knows it ſelfe ſuch, as it is to the *thirſty* ſoul, that feels his need; give him Chriſt or elſe he dyes. And in the laſt place, make them but know themſelves to be *Dogs* and *Swine* (for man is ſuch a vile beaſt, a *Behemoth*, a great beaſt, that he knows not himſelfe to be a beaſt) but when he knowes it, he can no more endure to remain in that State, than a Sheep in the mire wherein it is fallen: or return to it, being once delivered from it, than he can return to take up his own *vomit*, or to wallow in the mire with his beſt cloaths. O he would not for a world be delivered to the hands of his old Maſter again, as that poor one ſaid. Surely *Luthers* words upon the firſt word of *Pſal.* 14. command our obſervation, *The whole world lying in evil, is that Nabal, that fool, that vile one.* And there we lay all, being *children born under wrath as were others*, till an Almighty hand plucked us thence, and free grace made the difference. We queſtion much whether your Diſciples and Saints born, ſuch are acquainted with this. You ſhal do wel to conſider on it, and after due conſideration inform them about it. So we draw towards a concluſion; You ſee how

Dignitas in indigno, ornamentum in tuto, Sal. 392.

Cant. 5. 6.

our

our love works towards you; it loves to be adding; and this more, we beseech you be resolved from the Parent before you baptize his Infant, what *Baptisme* is? What it seales to? and then what the *Covenant* is? and what is intendment in tendering his Child thereunto? We doubt not but you will find Scripture grounds for all this, which will bind you to make this *inquisition*, which likely you will find as troublesome to them, as would be the bloody *Inquisition*, you know where. For these Doctrines are unpleasing to flesh and blood, a very torment unto it; it may lose you the hearts of the most and best in your Parish, in the worlds account; yet indeed not worthy your account, but it will gain, by Gods blessing, some hearts to God, and so further your account at the great day, for so may you shew your self *wise*, and shine in due time as the brightness *of the firmament*, and *turning many to righteousness, as the Stars, for ever and ever, Amen.* More we could say to this matter, unto you, but we will speak it for you in our Closet, and doubt not but all the godly Ministers and people in the Land that are walking together in the way of holiness will pray for you, and your Brethren of the same perswasion with you, working in a way broad enough for a *Believer without faith*, a *Christian without Christ*, a *Saint without holiness* to walk in, and never offend the flesh: Indeed you have need of the prayer of these, who can *pray in prayer*, who will never cease praying till all the godly in the Land may mind one thing, and walk in one way; which unspeakable mercy, He that is the hearer of prayers, grant unto his people for his own Name sake, *Amen.*

FINIS.